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A publication of the Canada Council for the Arts

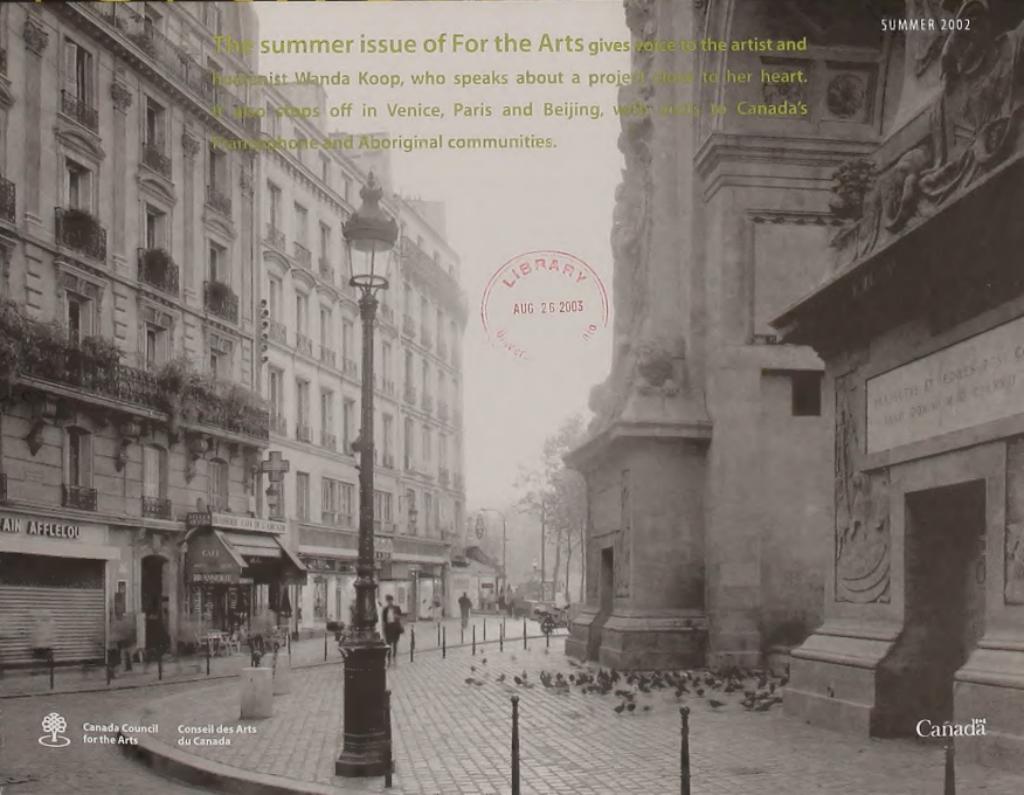


For the Arts

11

SUMMER 2002

The summer issue of *For the Arts* gives voice to the artist and
humanist Wanda Koop, who speaks about a project close to her heart.
It also stops off in Venice, Paris and Beijing, with visits to Canada's
Francophone and Aboriginal communities.



Canada Council
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THROUGH HER EYES, THROUGH HER HEART: THE CONTAGIOUS POWER OF ART

An interview with artist Wanda Koop

A recurring theme in the pages of this newsletter is the necessity of art in our lives. Artists illustrate, recount, examine and record those aspects of our realities that often elude us. They open our minds and imaginations to a new language. Their works sometimes achieve dimensions that allow us to understand the full human impact of a simple gesture – and all the power of art.

For the Arts presents the words of an artist whose vision of art reflects as well an intelligent vision of the heart. Wanda Koop demonstrates a talent that extends beyond her studio and her community to the wider world. From Winnipeg, she tells us about her project Art City, and at the same time, about her own artistic determination.



CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT: ART CITY WINNIPEG; BECKY AT ART CITY; JAN WADE AND MELANIE AT ART CITY; WANDA KOOP: SIGHTLINES, BY WANDA KOOP, MACKENZIE ART GALLERY, REGINA (PHOTO: DON HALL); IN YOUR EYES, BY WANDA KOOP, THE TETHIS FOUNDATION, 2001, VENICE, VENICE PHOTOS: WILLIAM LAKIN.

ART CITY: the project

Art City is going into its fifth year. It's a storefront arts centre for inner city youth at risk. It has recently become inter-age, so we now have young children and many parents. It is thriving – there are approximately 25 to 40 children a night. Some evenings you can hear a pin drop: they're concentrating on their work. We try to bring in at least two professional artists a month to do workshops – community and international artists. There are six co-ordinators, many of them art school students. We have two directors and someone who just does fundraising.

I call it the art heart of West Broadway and it truly is that. We have a photography program with a darkroom, a ceramic studio, a video and computer lab, a food program and an Art City van, an 'art car' created with artist Ken Gubrick from Vancouver. We have many outreach programs, group home caseworkers bring their kids to do workshops. We have off-campus students, beading and sewing workshops, interaction with the seniors home, Manitoba Theatre for Young People, mural projects on the sides of buildings, community parades and park beautification projects.

It has become much more successful than I ever dreamed. I didn't quite realize when Art City started just how relevant and important it would become. Art City is something everyone can participate in. It is not some elitist activity that non-artists can experience only as passive viewers or important outsiders. It shows us that individually and collectively we can all tap into our capacity for creativity – and that is our greatest gift.

ART CITY: the dream

I've been an artist for 30 years. In the early years I was the director of art programming for 60 inner city playgrounds for the City of Winnipeg. That's how I put myself through university. I also did 15 years of Artist in the Schools through the Manitoba Arts Council, travelling to northern and rural communities doing painting workshops. I knew through these experiences the power of art to change lives. Apart from my work as a visual artist I am also a community activist. I've worked on housing, health reform, all kinds of things.

This neighbourhood had been referred to by the local press as 'murders half acre'. There was a group of us who set about to

make changes; we've been very successful. I had worked on that for at least 13 years straight, logging hundreds of meetings, zoning challenges, etc., but we still had a huge gang problem and I knew what could change that.... We started out by getting money from local businesses to rent the space, borrowed students who were supposed to be watering plants to work as co-ordinators. A private business man gave money for artists and I worked for free. For something like this you can't do a quantitative study. But we've seen kids come in and lives changed. For instance, there was one young squeegee girl who came in. She had a hood over her head and wouldn't show her face. She started coming every day and two years later she was completely transformed. Her face was bright and shiny. She was painting beautiful paintings and ended up going back to her family.

My dream would be that these centres could open next to every sports arena in Canada. I don't think it's just inner city kids that need this kind of attention. The gang activities have gone down in our neighbourhood. Breaking and entering has almost disappeared. There's a kind of energy and synergy in the community that is very special.

ART CITY: making it happen

It took us a long time to build a really good board and we've ended up buying the building. Funding is always a problem. Ironically, getting the cultural community to pay attention was the most difficult. The social agencies were more willing to try. The cultural funding bodies at first thought of it as a special project, and the social agencies saw it as cultural. We have to apply for everything all the time, and core funding still eludes us. It's a very ambitious program and we constantly need donations, donations of materials; we do a lot of recycling. It's in the hands of two incredible co-directors, Janine Hogue and Elise Finnegan. They're dynamite. It has become a younger generation that is really caring. It reminds me of when the parallel gallery system was in its beginning stages.

I think that community art centres are integral to what will happen to us in the future. We are not necessarily making artists, we are giving people the opportunity to think creatively and my feeling is that if you can think creatively, you can survive almost anything. We're fostering confidence and empowering individuals

who would slip through the cracks. I have long believed that art is the opposite of war, that creativity is the opposite of destruction. Through creativity we can find alternatives to armed conflict, poverty, social injustice and environmental degradation. Art City has helped one community realize that through creative activity it can effect social change. Multiply this throughout all our communities. Can you imagine what could happen?.... Other cities are looking at our model and saying 'if it's working for them, maybe it can work for us.' And I don't see why not.

Wanda Koop has received the Community Builder's Award (2000), the Manitoba Arts Council Foundation Award and an honorary doctorate from the University of Winnipeg in recognition of her national and international artistic work and her work with Art City.

The worlds according to Wanda Koop

The vitality and talent of Wanda Koop breach continental divides. For 30 years, camera and small sketchbook in hand, she has pursued her research while documenting the imaginary world of her art. Koop recently took part in the *Think Canada* festival, a travelling exhibition that took her to Delhi, Madras and Bombay. Though she had never before exhibited in India, Koop confides that she absorbed the cultural colour of India and also experienced how the language of art can create a space that fosters communication between people.

Her travels through the worlds of the arts (the plural reflects her perceptions) also took her to the Venice Biennale in 2001. In a setting of great beauty, she presented her installation, *In Your Eyes*, the result of five years of work. What remains of the exhibit curated by Robert Enright are three brochures, chronicles of the project's history. Describing *In Your Eyes*, and associating it with her recent installation *Sightlines* (shown at the Mackenzie Art Gallery), Koop speaks of her working process, the relationship between painting, video and sound. For her, the installations are a poetic, interactive merging, where videos become moving paintings and paintings become frozen videos. (See www.mts.net/~artcity/)

WANDA KOOP WAS INTERVIEWED BY LOLITA BOUDREAU

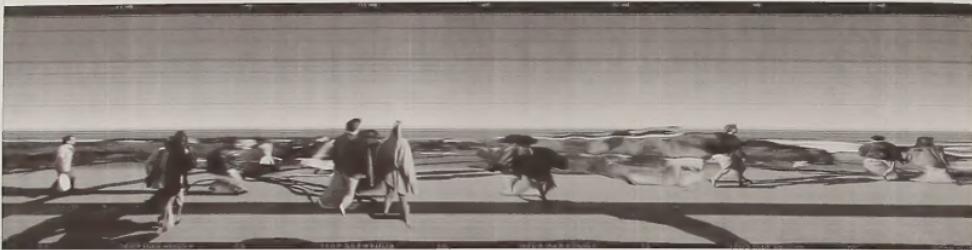
Michael Awad, David Rokeby and Eve Egoyan at the Venice Biennale in Architecture

Three works in a single project: this is what emerged from the collective imagination of architect and curator Michael Awad, multimedia artist David Rokeby and pianist and sound artist Eve Egoyan for the prestigious Venice Biennale in Architecture. The three artists will represent Canada with a project entitled *Next Memory City*, which depicts contemporary urban life. The Biennale opens September 8 and runs to November 3.

The three works of art are Michael Awad's *Chinatown*, a long, horizontal photograph of life in Toronto's Chinatown, which will wrap the interior walls of the Canadian Pavilion; David Rokeby's video *Watch*, in which

images of Venetian pedestrians are projected onto large video screens in the centre of the pavilion; and a sound work by Eve Egoyan, which is being created in collaboration with David Rokeby.

The media arts centre InterAccess and the media collective Alphabet City, both of Toronto, collaborated on the multidisciplinary project. Financial support is being provided by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Canada Council. The National Gallery of Canada maintains the permanent Canadian Pavilion in Venice and the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal plays a consulting role.



CHINATOWN, BY MICHAEL AWAD

A majority of minorities



"We are a majority of cultural minorities, and therein lies our strength."

THE EYE WITNESS NEWS TEAM AT THE CONFERENCE OF THE FCCF (FROM LEFT): PHOTOGRAPHER HUBERT PANTILL, ALAIN CHARTIER AND COUP DE COEUR FRANCOPHONE, HÈRE CORMIER OF THE THÉÂTRE POPULAIRE D'ACADEMIE AND THE COMMISSION INTERNATIONALE DU THÉÂTRE FRANCOPHONE, AND THE EYE OF LUCIEN CHAPUT OF ÉDITIONS DU BLE.

In 1977, in the heart of Canada, in St. Boniface, Manitoba, a group of Francophones got together with the objective of ensuring that Francophone Canadian communities would survive and flourish. Fully aware of the need for cultural development in the regions and inspired by a spirit of cooperation, these visionaries founded the Fédération culturelle canadienne-française. The FCCF is recognized today by both its members and the cultural communities it serves as a crucial organizational tool.

Twenty-five years later, from June 12 to 16, 2002, at the Centre culturel franco-manitobain in St. Boniface, members of the FCCF along with artists and cultural stakeholders took stock of the cultural situation of francophones in Canada and celebrated the FCCF's quarter-century mark. To kick off the discussions, Annabelle Cloutier, in charge of cultural development at the FCCF, painted a picture of the national situation, focusing on organizational fatigue and the need to establish collective strategies for action. The assembly in turn examined the role of local, provincial and municipal organizations, cultural awareness-building, the repercussions of national cultural action programs and the realities of arts dissemination and networking.

In the evening, debates gave way to cultural expression in all its forms: launches, openings, theatre,

jazz and poetry. For its part, the Canada Council hosted the opening of *Au-delà de l'image*, featuring Franco-Manitoban visual artists Dominique Rey and Marcel Gosselin.

While there was no doubt the evenings stimulated imaginations, the messages of the speakers also left their mark. Among the resolutions that were adopted, one on dissemination, in particular on problems linked to assistance programs, will undoubtedly hold the attention of members over the coming months. The words spoken by Pierre Raphael Pelletier, chairman of the FCCF, will probably be echoed by others: "We are a majority of cultural minorities, and therein lies our strength." Among the speakers who looked at the past and present, Johanne Landry – artist, music professional and jurist – provided an interesting overview of minority rights during which she noted that the protection of minorities is one of the four unwritten principles on which the Canadian constitution is based. While she admitted that the right recalls for her the necessity of preserving her Francophone and Acadian identity, Landry also evoked the foundations of a society that is enriched through the diversity of its cultures.

To find out what's happening on the francophone scene, visit www.zof.ca

Representing the Aboriginal arts community: taking the pulse



HIGHLIGHTS FROM BONES, AN ABORIGINAL DANCE OPERA, WERE PERFORMED AT THE NATIONAL GATHERING ON ABORIGINAL ARTISTIC EXPRESSION. ABOVE IS PARON JOHNS. (PHOTO: DON LEE/CANFF CENTRE)

It has been 12 years since the creation of the first Aboriginal Arts Advisory Committee at the Canada Council. In a presentation to the National Gathering on Aboriginal Artistic Expression (www.expressions.gc.ca), organized by the Department of Canadian Heritage, Council board member Suzanne Rochon Burnett took stock. She provided an overview of progress and steps still to be taken at the Council to bring it up to speed in terms of the needs of Aboriginal arts communities.

Rochon Burnett noted that despite the best intentions of cultural agencies, the situation in Aboriginal arts communities has too often remained unchanged. Conscious of the gap to bridge to ensure fair and strong cultural representation for Aboriginal peoples, she echoed the recent recommendations of the Council's second Aboriginal Arts Advisory Committee and the Council's responses to those recommendations. On the one hand, the expectations that Aboriginal communities have of the Council, their weak participation in Council programs and the necessity of their involvement in the structural and decision-making processes clearly demonstrate the need for immediate action. On the other hand, the

establishment of programs targeted to Aboriginal communities, education sessions on Aboriginal cultures, surveys carried out in the communities, studies to gauge the impact of Council funding on Aboriginal communities and the creation of special committees show real progress in the areas of consultation and dissemination.

Rochon Burnett concluded her presentation to the conference by underlining the relevance of Aboriginal arts programs and emphasized that as of this year, the Council has an officer responsible for Aboriginal arts in each of the six arts disciplines. They are: longstanding employees Ian Reid in media arts, Paul Seesquasis in writing and publishing and Gerri Trimble in music; and newcomers Jim Logan in visual arts, Jerry Longboat in dance and Bruce Sinclair in theatre. The arrival of Yukon storyteller Louise Profitte-LeBlanc as the Aboriginal Arts Coordinator was also welcomed enthusiastically, as was the forthcoming arrival of an Inuktitut-speaking officer. In addition to Rochon Burnett, Council participation at the conference included Director Shirley Thomson and Chair Jean-Louis Roux, who co-chaired separate sessions.

Geoffrey James wins the 2002 Roloff Beny Photography Award

Photographer Geoffrey James has won the 2002 Roloff Beny Photography Award for his book, *Paris*, which illustrates the French capital's "complex relationship with modernity." *Paris* beat out 46 other entries. James shares the \$60,000 cash award with his publisher, the Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris, and art historian Hubert Damisch, who wrote the text. James worked on the book while living in the Canada Council's Paris studio at Cité des Arts, a space he described as "monastic." The award, which is given out every two years, is in honour of the late, internationally-renowned Canadian photographer Roloff Beny. (*Paris* is distributed by ABC Art Books Canada.)



BOULEVARD HAUSSMANN, 67, BY GEOFFREY JAMES, FROM HIS BOOK PARIS.

Writers represent CanLit at Beijing book fair

A contingent of Canadian writers made a literary splash in China this May, attending events in major centres and taking part in the Beijing International Book Fair, the premier publishing event in the world's most populous country. Alberta writers Rudy Wiebe (author of *A Discovery of Strangers*) and Thomas Wharton (*Salamander*), Monique Proulx of Quebec (*Le Coeur est un muscle involontaire*), Andrew Pyper from Ontario (*The Trade Mission*) and Newfoundland's Joan Clark (*Latitudes of Melt*) were star attractions. As was Louise Mongeau of *La Courte Échelle* (the Montreal children's book publisher has sold rights for the translation of 50 books into Chinese). The fair attracted some 75,000 Chinese book industry buyers.

A Canada Council booth was set up with help from the Canadian Embassy to promote Canadian literature and encourage its translation. A booklet on English and French-language Canadian literature — written by University of Ottawa professor David Staines and journalist Stanley Paquin — was available in Chinese. The Canadian authors and Council Director Shirley Thomson gave numerous media interviews, and the Council's man-about-letters, Gordon Platt, fielded hundreds of enquiries from industry representatives. Seventy-five Canadian books (by the likes of Margaret Atwood, Michael Ondatje, Carol Shields,



Rudy Wiebe and Anne Hébert (have already been translated into Chinese).

In co-operation with the Ottawa International Writers Festival and the Chinese Writers Association, the Canadian writers also participated in special conferences on Canadian literature at the Universities of Beijing and Ningbo. The timing of the visit was opportune, given China's recent admission to the WTO and its eagerness to establish cultural ties with the West. The trip also coincides with burgeoning international interest in Canadian literature.

News and Updates



Photo: David Cooper

Daniel MacIvor wins Obie Award

Daniel MacIvor, artistic director of the Toronto theatre company da da kamera, has received a Special Citation

Village Voice Obie Award in New York. The Off-Broadway Obie theatre award was for the New York production of *In It, by da da kamera*. Other artists receiving Special Citation Obies were actress Elaine Stritch and Ingmar Bergman and the Royal Dramatic Theatre of Sweden.

Council launches Eurotour.03 world music competition

The Canada Council has launched Eurotour.03, a national competition that will send seven professional music groups to Europe to perform at selected world music festivals. Canadian musicians will perform in Holland, Austria, Switzerland and Germany. The purpose of the tour is to promote Canada's Aboriginal and folk music, jazz, world music, musique actuelle, electronic music, and music and spoken word in the European music market.

See www.canadacouncil.ca/grants/outreach/

Christopher Newton strides off-stage – with Molson Prize under his arm

Christopher Newton, who this year is retiring as artistic director of the Shaw Festival after 23 seasons, has been awarded the 2002 Canada Council for the Arts Molson Prize. Two \$50,000 Molson Prizes are awarded each year for outstanding achievement in the arts and the social sciences or humanities. The latter prize goes to McGill medical anthropologist Margaret Lock. Christopher Newton has made outstanding contributions to Canadian theatre for over 30 years as an actor, playwright and artistic director. His crowning achievement, the internationally-renowned Shaw Festival, has had a remarkable artistic and economic impact.

On other prize fronts, the Vancouver Art Gallery has received the York Wilson Endowment Award of \$20,000, for the purchase of the painting *Space, Place and Reason*, by Vancouver artist Paul Yuxweluptun. The paintings of Yuxweluptun have been exhibited in Canada, the U.S., Germany and France; his work can be found in collections in Canada and Europe.

2002 CBC Literary Awards launched

This year's edition of the CBC Literary Awards, for which the Canada Council provides \$60,000 in prizes, have been launched. The deadline for entries in the categories of fiction, poetry and travel writing is September 30. The winning short stories, poems and travel pieces will be announced in February, broadcast on CBC Radio and Radio Canada and published in Air Canada's in-flight magazine *en Route*. The awards, in existence since 1979, provide \$6,000 and \$4,000, respectively, to winners and runners-up in the three categories in both English and French. See www.cbc.ca/literaryawards.

International arts federation will meet next in Singapore

The second World Summit on the Arts and Culture will be held in Singapore from November 23 to 26, 2003. It will be hosted by the National Arts Council of Singapore, one of the founding members of the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies, which was created at the first World Summit in Ottawa. The Summit will be preceded by a general assembly of the Federation, at which time members will adopt a constitution and elect a permanent board. The interim board is headed by Canada Council Director Shirley Thomson. IFACCA currently has 26 member-countries worldwide; another 20 countries are either finalizing applications or considering membership. See www.ifacca.org.

Jay Teitel wins National Magazine Award in arts category

Journalist Jay Teitel is the winner of a 2002 National Magazine Award in the arts and entertainment category. The prize, sponsored by the Canada Council, is given out at the annual magazine awards event. Teitel won first prize for "Magic in the Aria," an article in *Saturday Night* magazine about Canadian opera singers Isabel Bayrakdarian and Robert Pomakov.

For the Arts is a quarterly newsletter published by the Canada Council for the Arts. It is posted on the Council's web site at www.canadacouncil.ca

ISSN 1488-8912

Editors: Lolita Boudreault, Terry O'Grady
Contributor: Donna Balkan
Translation: De Villiers-Côté, Susan Rodocanaci
Design: Version 2 (info/version2.ca)
Subscriptions: For a free printed copy, contact suzanne.tousignant@canadacouncil.ca or at the address below.

Please let us know your views:

Lolita Boudreault or Terry O'Grady

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The Canada Council for the Arts
 P.O. Box 1047, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5V8
 Tel.: 1-800-263-5588, ext. 4127,
 or (613) 566-4414, ext. 4127
 Fax: (613) 566-4407
 E-mail: terry.o.grady@canadacouncil.ca
lolita.boudreault@canadacouncil.ca

For information on Council programs,
 contact the Arts Services Unit,
 e-mail: info@canadacouncil.ca
 or fax (613) 566-4390

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La coopération du Festival international des arts vivants à Québec est l'aboutissement de deux années d'efforts et d'investissements financiers et humains importants. Les deux dernières années ont été marquées par une croissance régulière de l'engagement des partenaires et des participants. L'objectif principal est de promouvoir la culture et les arts dans la communauté et de contribuer à l'épanouissement culturel et social de la ville. Le festival a également pour objectif de favoriser la rencontre entre artistes et publics, et de promouvoir la diversité culturelle et artistique.

Leurs publications sont destinées à la recherche et à la diffusion de l'information sur les émissions de gaz à effet de serre et leur impact sur le climat. Ces publications sont destinées à une audience scientifique et technique, mais elles sont également accessibles au public. Elles couvrent un large éventail de sujets, y compris les émissions industrielles, les émissions domestiques, les émissions liées aux transports et les émissions liées à l'agriculture. Les publications sont généralement basées sur des données fiables et solides, et sont utilisées pour informer les politiques publiques et les stratégies d'adaptation au changement climatique.

A black and white photograph of a narrow, perspective-lined street in a city, likely New York City, showing tall buildings on both sides.

dis. (Prix est distribué par Arc Art Books Canada)

La fotografía es la expresión más pura de la creatividad. Es una forma de expresión que permite capturar momentos y emociones en un instante. La fotografía es una forma de arte que ha sido utilizada a lo largo de la historia para documentar eventos y personas. La fotografía es una forma de comunicación que permite transmitir información visual de una manera efectiva y precisa. La fotografía es una forma de expresión que permite comunicar ideas y sentimientos de una manera única y poderosa.

Des auteurs canadiens à la foire du livre de Beijing

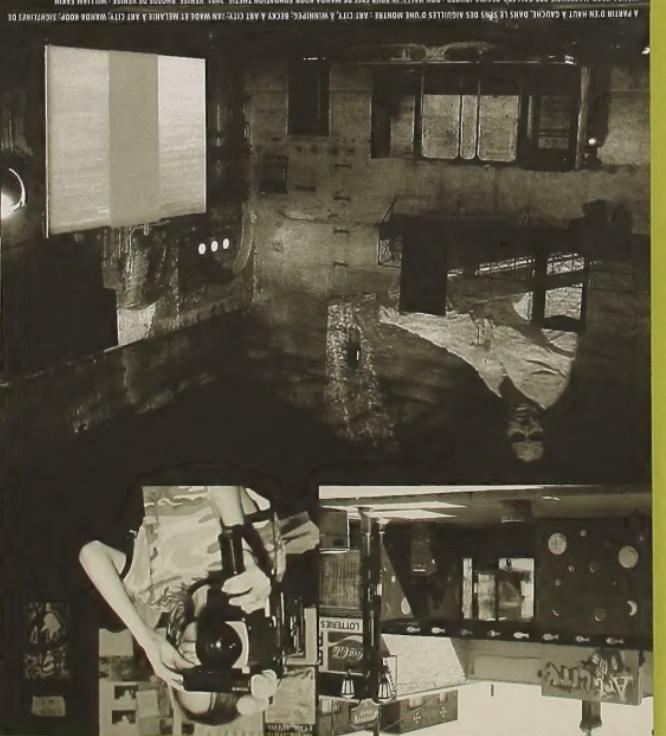
Le Pouls artistique des autochtones

Majoritaires



ART CITY/LIFE

ART CITY/LIFE Project est un programme de développement communautaire et artistique qui vise à renforcer la cohésion sociale et l'engagement des citoyens dans leur quartier. Le projet s'inscrit dans le cadre d'un partenariat entre la ville de Paris, la mairie du 18^e arrondissement et diverses associations et institutions culturelles. Il a pour objectif de créer des lieux de rencontre et d'échange entre les habitants et les artistes, de promouvoir la culture et l'art dans le quartier et de favoriser l'insertion sociale et professionnelle des jeunes. Le programme se déroule sur une période de deux ans et comprend plusieurs volets : ateliers d'art et de culture, expositions, spectacles, rencontres avec des artistes et des œuvres, et autres activités culturelles. Les participants sont principalement des jeunes de 15 à 30 ans, issus de milieux défavorisés ou en situation de précarité. Le programme vise à leur donner des outils pour développer leurs talents et leur confier des responsabilités dans leur quartier. Il encourage également les habitants à participer activement au développement de leur territoire et à prendre conscience de leur rôle dans la construction d'une société plus juste et plus équilibrée.



Pour les Arts propose ici les mots d'une artiste dont la perception des arts laisse transparaître une vision intelligente du cœur. Artiste établie, Wanda Koop possède un talent qui franchit les seuils de sa communauté et les portes du monde. De Winnipeg, elle nous livre le récit de son projet ART CITY (ville de l'art) et nous fait partager sa détermination artistique.

Mille fois sur ces pages a été illustrée la nécessité des arts dans nos vies. Les artistes illustrent, raccontent, analysent, archivent des aspects de nos réalités qui nous échappent et ils ouvrent nos esprits à la découverte d'un nouveau langage. Leurs œuvres atteignent parfois des dimensions qui permettent de saisir toute l'ampleur humaine d'un simple geste et tout le pouvoir des arts.

PAR SES YEUX, PAR SON CŒUR : LE CONTAGIEUX POUVOIR DES ARTS ENTREVIEWÉE AVEC L'ARTISTE WANDA KOOP

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Le numéro d'été de *Pour les Arts* transmet la voix humaniste de l'artiste Wanda Koop qui raconte l'histoire d'un voyage au cœur de ses souvenirs et l'effet aussi qu'elles ont sur elle. L'histoire d'une femme, mais aussi celle des communautés francophones et autochtones du Canada.

été 2002

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